# THE LEONARD LETTER

November 15, 2004

# **QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

"Liberty is often a heavy burden on a man. It involves the necessity for perpetual choice which is the kind of labor men have always dreaded."

-- Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. (1809-1894) American Poet

### UNDER THE DOME

# \*\*\*Confronting the Moral Values Agenda\*\*\*

On election day voters in 11 states rejected legalizing any marriage but that between a man and a woman. California voters did this several years ago. Despite that clear message, a California Assemblymember is already planning on introducing a bill to change the meaning of marriage when the new session of the legislature convenes in December. The bill will make marriage a contract "between two persons."

A couple of other legislators have announced their intentions to legalize suicide in California and provide legal protection to those who assist people in taking their own lives.

These extremist proposals put great political pressure on moderates, particularly the moderate Democrats in the majority caucus. Rank and file voters may seem to be silent, but as shown in this month's presidential election, once they perceive a clear difference between candidates on moral values their vote is decided even if it means crossing party lines. Do not let silence presume consent: get your pens and typing fingers ready to communicate with your legislators in a few short weeks.

# AROUND THE STATE

# \*\*\*Economic Vitality Questions\*\*\*

Governor Schwarzenegger has declared himself to be a man of action. One of the ways he is demonstrating this is by asking his advisors to think about what California should

look like in 20 years and what policies can lead to the capital investment necessary to get us there. To help answer these questions, the Governor's cabinet secretaries are touring the state, holding conversations with business, political, educational and community leaders to get their input on each region's priorities for economic vitality. The cabinet secretaries are posing three questions to participants in these discussions and I want to ask those same questions of Leonard Letter readers. Please share with me your answers to these questions:

- 1) What actions will have the most immediate impact on California's economic recovery?
- 2) What state actions will result in the most significant long-term improvement to California's economic competitiveness and comparative advantage?
- 3) How do we best structure an effective partnership between the regions and the state around economic strategy?

#### \*\*\*Tax Test\*\*\*

When people buy cars, trucks, boats or planes, the sales tax on those items are substantial. It is perhaps human nature to seek to avoid paying that extra amount and some people will go to great lengths to make it appear that their truck was not subject to California sales tax. Mostly this occurs by having the dealer deliver the vehicle to the buyer outside the state and then operating it for a few months elsewhere. This year, the legislature changed the law to make this harder to do. Senate Bill 1100 replaced that "90-day test" with a "12-month test." It became effective October 2<sup>nd</sup>. If you are a seller of such vehicles, or you are considering a purchase, review <a href="http://www.boe.ca.gov/news/pdf/L129.pdf">http://www.boe.ca.gov/news/pdf/L129.pdf</a> for the new information.

# FROM THE BLOGOSPHERE

# \*\*\*Generosity – Blue States vs. Red States\*\*\*

I saw an interesting Blue State/Red State comparison on Michelle Malkin's blog last week at: <a href="http://www.michellemalkin.com/">http://www.michellemalkin.com/</a>. She linked to work done by a group called The Catalogue for Philanthropy. This organization compiled data to create what they call a Generosity Index. It is computed by taking each state's average income and average charitable contribution, then subtracting the contribution rank from the average income rank to get a single number for each state. For instance, Mississippi is last in average income (50th), but they are fifth in average giving, thus 50-5 = 45. By this measure, Mississippians are the most generous Americans on average. Below is a table that shows each state's ranking along with which presidential candidate won in each. Notice how far you need to scroll down before you see a blue state.

GENEROSITY INDEX STATE

**ELECTION RESULT** 

1	Mississippi	Bush
2	Arkansas	Bush
3	Oklahoma	Bush
4	Louisiana	Bush
5	Alabama	Bush
6	Tennessee	Bush
7	South Dakota	Bush
8	Utah	Bush
9	South Carolina	Bush
10	Idaho	Bush
11	Wyoming	Bush
12	Texas	Bush
13	West Virginia	Bush
14	Nebraska	Bush
15	North Dakota	Bush
16	North Carolina	Bush
17	Kansas	Bush
18	Florida	Bush
19	Georgia	Bush
20	Kentucky	Bush
21	Montana	Bush
22	Missouri	Bush
23	New Mexico	Bush
24	Alaska	Bush
25	Indiana	Bush
26	New York	KERRY

To see the complete list, go to:

http://www.catalogueforphilanthropy.org/cfp/db/generosity.php?year=2004

Today's Wall Street Journal "Best of the Web" says this comparison may not be totally fair because residents of the highest income state, Connecticut, could give all their income to charity and still not be listed as the most generous under this system. So instead a WSJ reader offers another look -- the percent of adjusted gross income people give to charity-- and found an even stronger correlation between red state citizens and generosity: http://www.opinionjournal.com/best/ (then scroll down to "The Selfish Party III.")

# **MISCELLANY**

# \*\*\*Citizenship Test 19\*\*\*

Today's test questions feature knowledge of the Constitution, but also asks would-be citizens to understand the United Nations.

- 80. In what year was the Constitution written?
- 81. What are the first 10 amendments to the Constitution called?
- 82. Name one purpose of the United Nations?
- 83. Where does Congress meet?
- 84. Whose rights are guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights?
- 85. What is the introduction to the Constitution called?

#### **BOE AND LEGISLATIVE DATES**

November 17, 2004 --- BoE meets in San Diego.

**November 30, 2004** --- Close of property tax assessment appeals filings in most California counties.

**December 6, 2004** --- Legislature Convenes/Swearing-In of Members.

**December 13, 2004** --- The electors in each State meet to select the President and Vice President of the United States.

**December 14-15, 2004** --- BoE meets in Sacramento.

**December 22, 2004** --- The President of the Senate, the Archivist of the United States, and other designated Federal and State officials must have the electoral votes in hand.

**January 6, 2005** --- The Congress meets in joint session to count the electoral votes (unless Congress passes a law to change the date).

# **NOTABLE DATES/ HISTORY**

**November 15, 1763 ---** Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon began surveying what became known as the Mason-Dixon Line between Pennsylvania & Maryland.

**November 15, 1777** --- The Articles of Confederation were adopted by the Continental Congress.

**November 15, 1864** --- General Sherman burned Atlanta.

**November 15, 1869 ---** Free postal delivery was formally inaugurated.

**November 15, 1932 ---** The Walt Disney Art School was created.

**November 16, 1676 ---** The first colonial prison was organized (Nantucket, Massachusetts).

**November 17, 1853 ---** Street signs were authorized at San Francisco intersections.

**November 18, 1936 ---** The main span of the Golden Gate Bridge was joined.

November 19, 1493 --- Christopher Columbus discovered Puerto Rico on his second voyage.

November 19, 1970 --- Golden Gate Park Conservatory became a California state historical landmark.

**November 20, 1888 ---** William Bundy patented the timecard clock.

**November 21, 1990** --- The Declaration of "End of Cold War" was signed in Paris.

#### GENERAL TAX INFORMATION

For answers to your general tax questions, call the Board of Equalization information center. Customer service representatives are available to help you from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pacific time, Monday through Friday (except state holidays).

Toll-free number: 800-400-7115 TDD service for the hearing impaired

TDD phones: 800-735-2929 Voice phones: 800-735-2922

To reach the Taxpayer Rights Advocate's office for assistance with any BOE issues, see http://www.boe.ca.gov/tra/tra.htm, or call toll-free 1-888-324-2798.

# HOW TO CONTACT ME

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